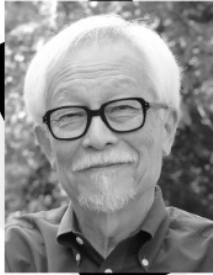


Allan Say, Author and Illustrator



Most people seem to be interested in turning their dreams into reality. Then there are those who turn reality into dreams. I belong to the latter group.

1 From the time Allan Say was just six years old, he knew that he wanted to be a cartoonist. At twelve he became an *apprentice* to Noro Shinpei, a famous cartoonist in Japan. An *apprentice* is a person who learns a skill from a professional. Noro Shinpei taught Allan how to be a cartoonist, but he also taught him how to draw in both the Japanese and Western styles.

2 When Allan was 16, he and his father immigrated to the United States. Once Allan graduated from high school, he decided to return to Japan, but he only stayed there for a year before returning to California. Japan had changed, and Allan felt more comfortable living in the United States.

3 Allan got a job as a sign painter and also studied art and architecture. Then he was drafted into the army. While he was in the army, Allan started practicing a new art form-- photography. He was so good that his photography appeared in the military newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*.

4 After his Army experience, Allan returned to California and started working as a commercial photographer. In between shoots, Allan worked on his drawings. Soon, Allan was asked to illustrate books for children's authors. In 1988, Allan was asked to illustrate a book called *The Boy of the Three Year Nap*. Allan won the *Caldecott Honor* for his illustrations. This award is given out yearly for the best illustrations in Children's literature. The

5 Soon, Allan Say started writing and illustrating books for children. In 1994, he wrote *Grandfather's Journey*. The illustrations were so good that he won the *Caldecott Medal*. Allan has many books for children. His books center around Japanese characters, thus bringing much-needed diversity to children's literature as a whole.

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Allan Say, Author and Illustrator

1. How did Allan's childhood impact what he does as a living?

2. What can you infer from the following statement?

In between shoots, Allan worked on his drawings.

3. In 1-3 sentences, summarize Allan's childhood.

4. In the text, the author writes, "His books center around Japanese characters bringing much needed diversity in children's literature." Why is it important to have diversity in children's literature?
